National Aeronautics and Space Administration

KSC Countdown

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THEMIS rocket arrives at CCAFS launch pad

◆ **ELV Update:** At Cape Canaveral Air Force Station's Pad 17-B, the first stage of the Delta II rocket for the THEMIS spacecraft has been installed into the launcher. Nine solid rocket boosters are being placed around the base of the first stage and attached in sets of three this week. The second stage will be hoisted atop the first stage on Jan. 16. At Astrotech, the five THEMIS probes are being installed onto the spacecraft carrier this week in preparation for spin testing.

◆ **ISS Update:** After a New Year's Day holiday, Expedition 14 Commander Michael Lopez-Alegria and Flight Engineer Suni Williams spent most of the week installing the U.S. oxygen generation system activation kit in the Destiny laboratory. The parts had been delivered on shuttle mission STS-121 in July. The new generator will supplement the Russian Elektron oxygen system on the station. The additional oxygen-generating capacity will be important as the standard station crew size increases to six as the complex grows. In their work with the new system this week, Lopez-Alegria and Williams installed a hydrogen vent valve and power, data and fluid hoses and cables. The system will be activated and tested later this year.

Meanwhile, Expedition 14 Flight Engineer and cosmonaut Mikhail Tyurin worked in the Russian segment of the station, where he upgraded soundproofing of the ventilation system. Tyurin installed new fans, sound-deadening vibration isolators and air ducts with acoustic shields to reduce the noise they create.

On Jan. 2, Williams set up the hardware for the Test of Reaction and Adaptation Capabilities, or TRAC investigation. It is a NASA-sponsored experiment jointly managed by scientists from Germany and Canada. Hand and eye coordination of crew members are tested before, during and after missions. The experiment gathers data about how, and to what extent, the brain adapts to weightlessness.

Crew members completed the final operations of a biological experiment on the impact of varying levels of light and gravity on plant root growth. The final images of samples in the European Modular Cultivation System were taken and downlinked, and the samples were stowed in a freezer for eventual return to Earth.

Expedition 14 crew begin new experiments on space station

■ **NASA Update —** NASA Administrator Michael Griffin and Deputy Administrator Shana Dale will host a NASA Update at 1 p.m. **today** to discuss the year ahead for the agency. This all-hands meeting for NASA employees will be broadcast live on NASA Television and webcast on the agency's home page from the Headquarters auditorium. Employees may watch the event on NASA TV and on the Web on the center's internal webcast site listed at **http://insidenasa.nasa.gov/nasa_nas/ops/nasatv**. Employees may ask questions from the Press Site News Auditorium (please arrive before 12:45 p.m.) or e-mail questions to *nasaupdate@hq.nasa.gov*.

■ **Get Immunized —** It is not too late to get a flu shot to protect yourself during the flu season. Immunity begins within two weeks. Please go to the Occupational Health Facility weekdays between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. or the Launch Area Clinic, Bldg. K6-1145, weekdays between 7 a.m. and 3 p.m. to get immunized.

■ **NASA Science —** It's official: the moon is on the metric system. NASA is returning to the moon, and the agency has decided to use metric units for all future lunar operations. You can read the full story at **http://science.nasa.gov/headlines/y2007/08jan_metricmoon.htm?list947891**.

■ **Did You Know?** The NASA Engineering and Safety Center Academy is currently accepting applications for its next knowledge-sharing course, Software As an Engineering Discipline: Learning from the Past and Looking to the Future. It will be presented March 13-15. NASA engineers and scientists can register for the Software course and learn more about the NESC Academy and its instructional program, including online courses, by logging on to http://www.nescacademy.org.

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